

# ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST REGISTRATION COMMITTEE

## DRAFT

## MEETING MINUTES

Monterey Conference Center

Cottonwood Room

1 Portola Plaza

Monterey, CA

### Members Present:

Ms. Dianne Martinez, REHS, Chairwoman, CEHA representative

Ms. Alicia Enriquez, REHS, Secretary, Public Sector

Dr. Tom Hatfield, Dr. PH., REHS, University Program

Mr. Steve McCalley, MBA, REHS, CCDEH

Mr. Arturo Aguirre, MS, REHS, CCDEH - via conference call

### **QUORUM ESTABLISHED**

### Members Absent:

Ms. Shelia Reed, MS, Public Member Appointed by the Assembly

Mr. Todd Frantz, REHS, Private Sector

Ms. Donna Gurule, MS, REHS, university program

Dr. Dean Kelaita, Health Officer, Calaveras County

### Environmental Health Specialist Registration Program Staff Present:

Mr. Robin Hook, REHS, Chief Environmental Management Branch

Mr. Glenn Takeoka, REHS, Chief Environmental Health Services Section, Executive Officer

Ms. Margaret Blood, REHS, EHS Registration Program Administrator

### Guests

Mr. Doug Turner, REHS, consultant CPS Human Resource Services

Mr. Ron Williams, Tulare County Training Coordinator

Mr. Charles Hemans, Tulare County environmental health specialist trainee

### **OPENING REMARKS** Ms. Dianne Martinez, REHS, Chairwoman, CEHA representative

At 9:07 PM Chairwoman Martinez asked the committee members to come to order and requested that everyone present introduce himself or herself, a quorum was established. Martinez asked the members to review the minutes from the October 7, 2004 meeting. A motion was made (McCalley) and seconded (Hatfield) to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously. The agenda was reorganized to accommodate Mr. Hemans' and Mr. William's item from Miscellaneous to the first agenda item.

**Charles B. Hemans Jr. – Tulare County Trainee**

Environmental Health Specialist Registration Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
April 25, 2005

Mr. Charles B. Hemans, Environmental Health Specialist Trainee at Tulare County requested that the Department accept California State University, Fresno (CSUF) CHEM 008 Elementary Organic Chemistry (lecture only), as meeting the requirements of organic chemistry lecture and lab for environmental health specialist registration under option I. Section 106635 of the Health and Safety Code requires that an approved organic chemistry course under option I include a lecture and laboratory component.

Mr. Hemans argued that CHEM 008 should be credited because it is the same course required for option V graduates at CSUF and brought a letter from the environmental health degree program coordinator Dr. Sandra Donohue in support of his position. Option V does not require a lab section to be included in the organic chemistry course requirement.

Mr. Williams, Training Coordinator also argued on behalf of Mr. Hemans stating that he was a valuable employee. During the discussion Mr. Hemans stated that he had taken first semester physics and passed with a grade of "C". With this information Blood explained that he could qualify for Option II and not need the organic lab.

*The committee voted to take the following actions: 1) DHS will review Mr. Hemans' transcripts that document a semester of basic physics (for science majors) and microbiology with a lab; 2) if necessary DHS should evaluate the lab content of the Plant Physiology course to determine if it covers the course content of an organic chemistry course; 3) DHS will write a letter for the chairwoman's signature to Tulare County suggesting that they allow a trainee three years to become registered in accord with the state law.*

**PROGRAM UPDATE.** Mr. Glenn Takeoka, Executive Officer

Mr. Takeoka distributed a brochure prepared by CDC-NCEH that reports on California's environmental health capacity and identifies a fragmented system, a declining workforce, and stretched resources as major problems for the state. Reorganization plans proposed in the California Performance Review (CPR), that would re-structure many state boards and commissions, have been withdrawn from consideration by the Little Hoover Commission. The REHS web site now lists all currently registered EHS's alphabetically; their name, registration number, and expiration date is included.

**Subcommittee Reports**

**Registration Process Subcommittee**

**Training Plan review update**

EHS Training Plan Status Report, dated March 2005, was distributed. The Registration Process Subcommittee (RegSub) has been meeting by conference call monthly and reviewing all new training plan submittals. They have also started sending notification letters to counties who employ trainees and do not have a current training plan. The next conference call is May 2, 2005 to review new and existing training plans. Once all

counties that employ trainees have current training plans the emphasis will shift to a review of the content of program specific training modules.

### **Education and Professional Standards Committee – Tom Hatfield** **Continuing Education**

The Education and Professional Standards Committee (EdSub) had a meeting earlier this year that included Ms. Vicky Sandoval, REHS, CEHA president, and Mr. Adam Rocke, REHS, retired Los Angeles County. CCDEH member Mr. Brian Moss was invited but was unable to attend. Both proposed regulations and guidelines were developed by DHS for review and comment by the committee. “Guidelines for Implementation of Continuing Education for Registered Environmental Health Specialists” and “Proposed Regulations for Continuing Education”

Takeoka provided a summary and historical perspective regarding the attempts to move forward with requirements for continuing education (CE) over the past 20 years. DHS does not recommend a statutory amendment at this time because the outcome is sometimes uncertain in the legislative process. The Committee discussed voluntary continuing education and McCalley suggested looking at entering the information into a database to begin documenting CE. Aguirre stated that CCDEH is in support of mandatory CE. Takeoka stated that it would take time to establish a mandatory requirement and the Committee should look to beginning a voluntary program with the intention of making it mandatory. The regulation process is deliberate and will take a minimum of 1 ½ years to establish mandatory CEUs. Hatfield asked if having the mechanism for documenting CE helps support an eventual mandatory program? Turner stated that CEHA is interested in pursuing mandatory CE. McCalley asked for a discussion of the difference between changing the statute vs. proposing new regulations. Hatfield suggested that we need a mechanism for implementing a voluntary program. Martinez suggested that DHS send a letter to all REHS’s notifying them of the intent to submit proposed regulations.

Hatfield asked if it is feasible to have a voluntary program and move forward with proposed regulations simultaneously? Takeoka agreed that this could be done. Hook said that any proposed regulations will require funding and therefore will be challenged by the affected groups particularly the county Boards of Supervisors. An economic impact statement will be a part of the regulation package. McCalley suggested that this may be good timing due to the proposed Food Code coming through this year and supports moving forward with a reasonable timeline for implementation.

Takeoka stated that DHS would support moving the proposed regulations forward and begin the voluntary program.

*A motion was made (Hatfield) and seconded (McCalley) to approve the Proposed Regulations for Continuing Education and Guidelines for*

*Implementation of Continuing Education for Registered Environmental Health Specialists subject to the review and approval by CEHA and CCDEH.*

Discussion:

DHS will ask CEHA and CCDEH for their support of the proposed regulations and the implementation of a voluntary program. Aguirre and McCalley will bring the proposed regulations to CCDEH Executive Committee. Martinez will present to them to the CEHA Board of Directors later this afternoon at their meeting. Although DHS will not sponsor legislation requiring CE if CEHA or CCDEH sponsor the legislation, DHS would support it. Turner suggested that we review previous motions.

Once concurrence is received from CEHA and CCDEH, DHS will move forward with a regulation package and implement a voluntary program that includes a component to document continuing education.

*Motion passed unanimously.*

**Ad Hoc Committee meeting  
Curriculum Review**

On May 24, 2004 members of the Registration Committee and faculty from three of the five approved Environmental Health degree programs met with Patricia Young, consultant, CPS Human Resources Services. They documented how through science and environmental health courses, training, and/or experience candidates acquire the knowledge and skills needed to perform the duties of a REHS. Based on this detailed information, participants were asked to recommend whether pursuing legislative changes to update the curriculum was necessary. All participants agreed that legislative changes were not required currently. However, they did recommend that the Committee review elements of the criteria document, such as the operational definition of the basic science courses.

Over the past year the Ad Hoc Committee has discussed the definition of a basic science and came up with a flowchart to identify courses that are acceptable or unacceptable based on prerequisites, CAN system categories, science major requirements, and other criteria.

**University Degree Programs** Margaret Blood, Program Administrator  
DHS prepared and distributed the evaluation of the environmental health degree program for Loma Linda University. A site visit was conducted in April 2004.

*A motion was made (Hatfield) and seconded (Enriquez) to accept the report with the recommendations and grant the environmental health program at Loma Linda University approval for three years. Motion passed unanimously.*

Environmental Health Specialist Registration Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
April 25, 2005

California State University, Fresno – The self-study was received in February and a site visit is planned for May 2005.

University of California, Los Angeles – Dr. Jane Valentine is writing their self-study and a site visit is anticipated during the fall semester 2005.

**Miscellaneous**      Margaret Blood, Program Administrator

**ENSC 141, Public Health Microbiology, University of Riverside** – referred to the Educational Subcommittee due to time constraints.

**CSU Sacramento - chemistry course**

Dr. Michael Nave, Associate Professor, Department of Kinesiology and Health Science at California State University, Sacramento (CSUS) has requested that the Department accept CSUS, CHEM 006A Introduction to General Chemistry, as meeting the requirements of general and inorganic chemistry for environmental health specialist registration. Following discussion, a motion was made:

*A motion was made (McCalley) and seconded (Hatfield) not to accept CHEM 006A as adequately satisfying the general chemistry requirement for environmental health registration. This course does not provide sufficient understanding of the principles of chemistry needed for a practicing environmental health specialist. No prior knowledge of chemistry is required as a prerequisite for CHEM 006 A and the course attempts to cover an entire year of subject matter in one semester. The student may become acquainted with broad chemical principles and concepts but will not be provided with the fundamental basis in chemistry needed to evaluate potential health impacts in the environment and make critical decisions.” The motion passed unanimously.*

**Environmental Health Capacity study by Loma Linda University**

Graduate student, Paola Case, is researching the human resource capacity to provide environmental health services within the state. She is using data from the REHS program and interviewing employers at the state, county and local levels. The report should be available this summer.

Turner asked the committee to consider the accreditation of Bob Jones University referred to the subcommittee due to time constraints.

**REHS Exam Revision**      Margaret Blood, Program Administrator

The new test plan was implemented for the first time at the March 2005 exam. A new study guide and new reference list were developed and are available on the web site. Over the past year 260 new items have been written and reviewed. This is an ongoing process and our upcoming contract with CPS includes two annual subject matter expert

Environmental Health Specialist Registration Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
April 25, 2005

panels in northern and southern California to continue to add new items and update existing ones.

**Schedule Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be via conference call on July 21, 2005 from 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM to follow up on continuing education.

**Closed Session – Confidential**

**Complaint Investigation**

Glenn Takeoka, Executive Officer

Two complaints were received from residents of Mendocino County to report that the person they had hired to design a septic system for them claimed to be an REHS but was not registered. We contacted the Mendocino County District Attorney's Office and the case is being investigated.

Since the names and expiration dates for all REHSs are now posted on the web site, we received a call from the City of Pasadena, who found that one Health Department employees had never been registered.

**A motion was made (McCalley) and seconded (Hatfield) to adjourn. Motion passed and meeting was adjourned at 12:10PM.**